1: Staden--1-8 (1553-54) 1928 Tupinamba 1-9
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"Very little is known about Hans Staden except the story of his voyages and captivity among the Tupi Indians of Brazil. He was born at Homberg in Hesse, where his parents had settled, and later when he returned from the New World he was living at Wolfhagen, not far from Cassel. Of his youth nothing is reported. He appears to have had some kind of education, after which he was trained as a gunner, and when still a young man, with the call of the New World upon him, he sailed early in 1547 from Holland for Lisbon in the hope of finding employment in one of the Portuguese ships sailing for America. Lisbon at that time had a German colony of its own, for the Welsers and Fuggers had their factors there, and Germans were freely recruited through the great commercial factory at Antwerp to serve as gunners in the Portuguese ships. Staden found a German inn at Lisbon where he lodged and where he must have encountered many of his countrymen, but when he arrived the King's ships had left. His host, hwoever, procured him employment in a vessel which was about to depart, carrying a cargo of convicts to Brazil, and some time in June 1547 he set sail. The captain had been ordered to seize any ships which were poaching on the Portuguese preserves off the African coast, and to attack French interlopers in Brazil, and after taking a prize and [2] encountering heavy weather they reached Pernambuco on January 28, 1548. Staden's first five chapters describe his voyage out, his adventures in the neighbourhood of Pernambuco, and his return to Europe. The rest of his book is taken up with the account of his second voyage, his captivity among the savages, and his final

escape.

Brazil had been discovered in 1500 by Vincent Pinzon, who landed on the coast near Cape St. Augustin in the State of Pernambuco and took possession in the name of the Spanish crown. Subsequently it appeared that the country was withing the Portuguese limits of demarcation agreed to by the Treaty of Tordesillas, and the Portuguese lost no time in exploring the new territory. Preoccupied, however, with maintaining themselves in India and the Far East, they did little for thirty years towards establishing themselves in Brazil. A few ships traded there with the natives, or set down criminals, but it was not until 1531 that anything like a serious effort was made at colonization. Hereditary Captaincies were then set up at several points along the coast, and by 1549 the whole colony was governed direct from Bahia. Duarte Coelho Pereira had been established at Pernambuco with his wife and children and kinsmen, and for some years peace and prosperity attended their efforts, but in 1548 war broke out with the natives, and when Hans Staden arrived he found himself in the thick of the fighting. The natives had besieged the Portuguese settlement of Garasu. Coelho could not spare any men, as he was expecting to be attacked himself, but he detailed the new-comers to assist the beleaguered settlers, and Hans Staden went off with forty men in a boat to their relief. He gives an interesting account of the methods adopted by the garrison, which consisted of some ninety men, to withstand a large besieging force estimated, with [3] considerable exaggeration, at eight thousand men, and after a fruitless

attempt by the attackers to cut off the food supplies and smoke out a food party with the fumes of burning pepper, the natives withdrew, and terms were arranged between them and the Portuguese. Hans Staden then sailed again for Portugal, where he arrived in October 1548 after an absence of sixteen months. There seems little doubt that by this time he had acquired a good working knowledge of Portuguese.

When Hans Staden returned to Europe men's minds were full of the conquest of Peru and aflame with the promise of untold wealth. An expedition was setting out from Seville for Rio de la Plata under Don Diego de Senabria, and Staden with a host of other adventurers joined the ships. The fleet, which consisted of three ships, set sail at Easter 1549, but the expedition was unfortunate from the first. The vessels encountered severe weather and were separated off the coast of Guinea, and the boat which carried Staden was delayed by contrary winds for four months. Finally, when they had been six months at sea, land was sighted, and after narrowly escaping destruction off the rocky coast of Paranagua, the ship found refuge in a harbour where it was hailed by a boat full of natives, in which were two Portuguese settlers who gave the captain his bearings. It had been agreed that if the ships were separated during the voyage they should meet at the island of Santa Catharina, where Senabria had been instructed to found a colony in close proximity to the Portuguese settlement at San Vincente, and when the wind was favourable the captain sailed southwards in search of it. The wind changed, however, and he was forced to seek shelter

in another harbour which he could not identify, but which turned out eventually to be the very haven he was seeking. Here, after three weeks, he was joined [4] by the second ship, but the third vessel was never heard of again. The crews now began to collect provisions for their voyage to Rio de la Plata, but one day a terrible calamity befell them, for the larger ship was lost in the harbour, and they were left with one ship only which was too small to attempt the voyage. For two years the survivors were forced to remain, cut off from the outside world, and supplied with food by the natives for so long only as they had hooks and knives to give them. After the supplies had given out they subsisted as best they could upon lizards, field-rats, and shell-fish, and whatever else they could catch. Finally the crews separated into two parties, one party setting off by land for Asuncion, where there was a Spanish colony, a journey which they could not expect to accomplish in less than six months, while certain of the others sailed with the ship to the Portuguese colony at San Vincente to see if a larger vessel could be freighted to complete the voyage to Rio de la Plata. Of the land party some survivors reached their destination after many hardships and dangers, but Hans Staden and his companions in the ship encountered fog and storms, and were finally shipwrecked and cast away on a desolate coast which no one could identify. Luckily a Frenchman who was running to and fro to warm himself espied some huts behind the trees. This turned out to a Portuguese settlement, and the castaways were relieved to find that they were only two leagues from San Vincente. A

ship was sent to fetch those who had remained behind, and when the men had recovered from their hardships they set to work to maintain themselves as best they could.

San Vincente, where they found themselves, was situated on an island of that name formed by an inland tidal channel, sometimes called the Santos river, on which the city and seaport of Santos now stands. It was the first Portuguese colony in Brazil, and at that time, and until 1710, the principal harbour of the Captaincy. To the east of San Vincente was another island called Santo Amaro, and on the mainland and protecting one of the channels, was a fort known as Brikioka (Bertioga), which was manned by the offspring of a Portuguese exile named De Praga, who lived there with a large tribe of his children. The Portuguese were friendly with the Tupinikin, a tribe inhabiting the neighbouring country, but were in deadly enmity with the Tupinambá to the north, from whom they were in constant danger of attack. It had been decided to erect another fort on the island of Santo Amaro opposite Bertioga, but this had been left unfinished since no one could be found to serve there. The Portuguese, learning that Hans Staden was a gunner, offered him a good salary and a promise of royal favour if he would take charge of the place, which he agreed to do for four months, by which time Thomé de Souza, the first governor-general of Brazil, was expected to arrive. Hans Staden took possession and with three companions guarded the fort safely until de Souza landed. He was then persuaded to continue his employment for two years more, after which he was to be sent home on the first ship returning to Europe. One day, while he was out hunting, he was

surrounded and captured by the hostile Tupinambá, and it is with this episode and its consequences that the main portion of his book is concerned.

It is a moving and exciting story. The Tupinambá regarded the Portuguese as their bitterest enemies, fit only when caught to be cooked and eaten. They complained that the Portuguese, when they arrived to trade, had induced the natives to enter their ships and had then seized and enslaved them, or had sold them to their enemies. Hans Staden was carried [6] off to their settlement at Ubatuba, to the south of San Vincente, his eyebrows were shaved off with a piece of glass, and soon his beard disappeared as well, and it was obvious that he was to be killed and eaten. He seems during his two years of enforced idleness in the harbour of Santa Catharina to have learnt the Tupi language, and he protested indignantly that he was not a Portuguese at all, but a German, and an ally of the French who were the friends of his captors. The savages replied with some point that he had been taken from a Portuguese settlement, and, as one of the chiefs remarked afterwards, the story was an old one, for he himself had caught and eaten five Portuguese, all of whom had protested that they were Frenchmen and yet they lied. One faint hope remained. There was a French trader in the neighbourhood who was brought in to determine the prisoner's nationality. He addressed Hans Staden in French, which the latter did not understand, and forthwith, without further inquiry or delay, abandoned the wretched man to his fate, telling the savages that he was indeed a Portuguese, their

enemy and his, and that the sooner he was eaten the better. We next see the prisoner hopping with his legs tied together in and out of the huts, while his tormentors felt his flesh and quarrelled as to who had the best right to the fattest bits. Hans Staden sang a hymn and prepared for death, but was saved for the moment by a timely attack of tooth-ache which prevented him from eating, and he grew thin.

It was at this stage that some doubts as to his nationality began to dawn upon his captors. The colour of his beard (which was red) had already attracted remark, since the Portuguese had mostly black beards, and the savages could not run the risk of eating a Frenchman or even an ally of the French. Then, by a lucky chance, one of his masters fell sick [7] while he was away on an expedition, and sickness seized the whole of his party. There had already been some talk about the man in the moon looking down angrily upon the savages' huts, and now the sick chief sent a messenger to ask the prisoner to tell his God to make him well again. No one can blame Hans Staden for making the most of his opportunities, and he played his cards with caution and skill. He replied that his God was indeed wrath with the chief and his people because they had called him a Portuguese and had threatened to eat him. Nevertheless, he went about laying his hands on the sick, and although his ministrations were not wholly successful, for many of the sufferers died, yet the chief recovered, and Hans Staden's stock began to rise. They told him their dreams. One chief, who on an earlier occasion had partaken so freely of roasted Portuguese that his digestion was permanently impaired, was much perturbed

at his terrible nightmares and vowed that he would never touch Portuguese flesh again. Even Hans Staden's great enemy, a chief named Alkindar, on promising to mend his ways, was cured of eye-ache. Then the French trader returned collecting feathers and pepper, and he so far repented of his previous conduct as to tell the savages that Hans was indeed an ally of his people and that they had better let him go. But the Tupinambá were not going to part with their prophet, and the Frenchman departed alone.

It is doubtful if Hans Staden was ever again in danger of death, but he was to witness a good deal of cannibalism. The reader can follow the gruesome details for himself, but the rites and ceremonies observed in connection with the slaying and eating are curious and interesting. The victim was painted and adorned with feathers and his eyebrows were shaved. For a time at least he was well treated. He [8] received a hut and furniture and was provided with a wife. Meanwhile his captors visited him frequently and examined him to see which of his limbs and joints they proposed to claim. His children were reared and might or might not suffer the same fate as the father. When all was ready invitations were sent out to the neighbouring tribes to partake of the feast. The club with which the victim was to be dispatched was adorned with tassels and smeared with pounded egg-shells and then religiously secluded. The executioner painted himself grey with ashes and adorned his body with feathers, and after he had dispatched the prisoner (who was expected to show complete indifference to his fate), blood was drawn from

the slayer's arm, and he was forced to retire to his hut for a time and lie in his hammock, amusing himself with a miniature bow and arrow to keep his eye in, this practice of seclusion and purification being intended doubtless to protect him from the angry ghosts of his victim. These rites and ceremonies, having been described by an eye-witness, are extremely valuable. Unfortunately the writer has added a wealth of detail which is merely sickening. He was determined that not a fraction of the horrors he had escaped should be lost on his readers."

1: Staden-8-14 (1553-54) 1928 Tupinamba 1-7
116, 123

"Although Hans Staden was to some extent now an honoured guest among the Tupinambá, he was not to regain his liberty for a considerable period. A bitter disappointment awaited him, for a French ship which arrived to trade for pepper, monkeys and parrots refused to take him away for fear of offending the savages. The crew did not even give him a shirt to cover his nakedness. In his desperation Hans Staden made his one dash for liberty. He fled from his keepers and swam out to the boat, but the Frenchmen refused to taked him in, and he was forced to swim back to the shore. Later he expressed the hope that God would forgive these men, but it is clear that he could not bring himself to do so, and on learning that the ship must have foundered on the return voyage he remarks only that such cruelty and want of pity could not go unpunished. When the next French ship arrived, however, he found himself among friends. By means of a clever ruse he contrived to be taken on board, and finally, amidst the lamentations of his captors, in whose hands he had remained for nearly a year, he commenced his homeward voyage. His perils were not yet over, for he was severely wounded in a skirmish with a Portuguese vessel in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro, but finally on February 20, 1555, he landed safely at Honfleur. From Honfleur he travelled to Dieppe, returning to Germany by way of London and Antwerp. Of his subsequent life nothing of importance is

known, but he must have settled down almost at once to write his history.

The book appeared at Marburg early in 1557, a small quarto volume adorned with woodcuts which must have been executed under the author's personal supervision. It was one of the earliest accounts of the New World and Brazil to appear in German, and its success seems to have been immediate. A second Marburg edition appeared in a few months, and two further editions were printed at Frankfurt, both dated 1557. It was frequently reprinted, and was translated into Latin, French and Dutch. A Portuguese version appeared in 1892, and there is no indication even now of any falling off in the general interest concerning Hans Staden and his adventures. How the book came to be written is by no means clear. It has been suggested that Staden was not sufficiently educated to write it himself, and that he must have compiled it under the direction of Dr. Dryander, the Marburg professor, who wrote the long-winded and [10] tedious introduction, but I do not believe it. Dryander certainly looked through the book, and probably corrected it here and there, but one has only to compare the introduction with the narrative to realize that if the learned Doctor's heavy hand had rested on Hans' Staden's work its whole character would have been changed. Moreover, Hans Staden was in no sense a dullard. He learnt Portuguese and probably Spanish. He picked up the Tupi language and spoke it apparently with considerable fluency, and I see no reason why he could not have described his adventures in the very simple language which is one of the charms of his book. It would be difficult to see how a work of this description could

be better arranged. In the first place we have a straightforward narrative of the author's personal adventures and misfortunes, written briefly and without any straining after effect. In the second part we have a treatise on the customs of the Tupinambá, their polity, trade, religion, manufactures and warlike undertakings, and of the flora and fauna of the country. This survey is the result of sustained and penetrating observation, and subsequent accounts have added little to the information given in it. Particularly interesting are the chapters devoted to the marriage ceremonies, government and laws, the personal adornment and religious observances of the people. Their gods were hollow gourds or pumpkins filled with stones, which when rattled were used for purposes of divination. In Chapter XXII, Part II there is a striking account of the blessing or bewitching of these rattles by the wise men who, in return for presents, imprisoned spirits in them with power to predict future events. The prisoner saw through the imposture at once, but to a simple unsuspecting audience it must have been a solemn and mysterious ceremony. Chapter XXIII, Part II contains an interesting description of the methods adopted [11] to keep up the supply of cunning women, and in Chapter XV, Part II there is an early reference to the tradition of the visit of St. Thomas the Apostle to America. Hans Staden does not tell the whole story, but when he enquired why the men had their heads shaved like monks,

he was told of a mysterious personage who had visited them in times past, working miracles among the people and teaching them many strange things including the use of the tonsure. An unexpected mention occurs in Chapter XXXIII, Part I, of the weeping welcome concerning which there is much in the accounts of early travellers, and which has attracted a good deal of attention in modern times (see Der Tränengruss der Indianer, by G. Friederici, Leipzig, 1907). The book in fact is full of odds and ends of information which give it a special value, quite apart from the story of the author's remarkable experiences and escapes.

Throughout his narrative Hans Staden shows himself as a curious mixture of simplicity and shrewdness. He was a very pious Lutheran and was ready to see the hand of God stretched out for his special safety in every disturbance of nature. The stories of the angry moon in Part I, Chapter XXX: of the miraculous cures (Chapter XXXIV): of the Cross in Chapter XLVI of the thunderstorm in Chapter XLVII, are all regarded as the inevitable and immediate response to his prayers. He seemed to take the view that Hans Staden's perilous situation had been at last reported in the proper quarter and was now being satisfactorily dealt with. Up to a certain point the careful reader is conscious of an undercurrent of pained surprise, as if the unfortunate victim of fate was asking himself how in a world now purged of heresies such things could be allowed to happen to any pious Lutheran, and that a good deal was due to him if his contract with his Maker was to be honourably fulfilled. Once [12] he was conscious that God was on his side he was a little

inclined to be presumptuous and self-centred. He was convinced, when asked to heal the sick, that his prayers would be answered, but he was seriously perturbed how to act, since he could not decide whether it would be more to his interest to let the sufferers die or live. We could wish that one or two episodes, particularly the episode in Chapter XXXIX, where a slave who had lied about him was killed and eaten, had been related in a different spirit, but it was part of the author's belief that all who wronged him should suffer both in this world and the next, and we must be careful not to judge him unfairly. It is certain that he had to face trials and dangers which would have tried the courage of many braver and more imaginative men. He was not a coward, and he really seems to have been more terrified of being eaten than of being killed. In any case we must remember that he willingly undertook the defence of the fort at Santo Amaro, which no Portuguese gunner would face, that he acquitted himself with distinction in action, and that when his captors had taken some Christian prisoners he remained by them to comfort and help them to meet their end, at a time when, apparently, he could have escaped quite easily.

The truth of Hans Staden's story does not seem ever to have been seriously questioned, although he obviously expected to be classed among the lying travellers. He is careful

in his concluding address to the reader--a most convincing document--to mention the names of all Europeans with whom he came into contact, so that sceptics could check his statements. The learned Dryander, his sponsor, was a well-known man in his day, and he and the Landgrave of Hesse seem to have gone thoroughly into the matter, and to have cross-examined the traveller again and again without shaking him. Moreover, the sources from which even a practised writer could have compiled such a book were very few. Many of Hans Staden's statements are confirmed, in some cases strikingly confirmed, by the French missionary, Jean de Léry, who was actually in Brazil while Hans Staden was writing his book. De Léry accompanied the Huguenot expedition sent out by Coligny. He remained from 1556 to 1558 among the natives and had special opportunities for studying the Tupinambá, whose habits, appearance and language are fully described in his Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Bresil, dite Amerique, published in 1578. It has been stated again and again by Hans Staden's German editors that de Léry, when he met with Staden's book, was so impressed by it that he remarked that he and the German traveller might have compared notes before putting pen to paper. I have searched for the authority for this statement, but I cannot find it. All I can say is that it is hallowed by continued repetition. Nor is it of much importance. The fact is that in every page of his book Hans Staden stands out as his own witness for truth. That he saw what he tells us he saw, and suffered the vicissitudes which he describes, cannot, I think, be doubted by anyone who has read his narrative with attention.

It is interesting to know that H. J. Winckelmann, who published his work Der Americanischen Neuen Welt Beschreibung in 1664, while engaged among the archives at Cassel, discovered thirty-four of the original wood blocks used by Hans Staden and used them again, although he does not seem to have known of the existence of the various editions of Staden's book which were issued in 1557. Winckelmann also printed a portrait of the traveller, which presents him as a long-bearded, solemn-looking elderly man clasping a book in his left hand, but I do not reproduce it, since a portrait produced for the first time a century after the sitter lived is open to a good deal of suspicion. It can be found at p. 3 of the facsimile reprint of Staden's book issued by the Frankfurter Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, published at Frankfurt-a.-M. in 1927."